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# **A SACRED TRUST**

**THE WORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
FOR DEPENDENT PEOPLES**

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## **A Voice From Africa**

You sit in the public gallery of one of the great committee rooms of the United Nations General Assembly. Below you, the men and women from Australia and Yemen, Bolivia and the Ukraine, India and Iceland—from all the sixty countries that comprise the United Nations—are seated at the curved and polished tables ranged in tiers around the room. They sit, like you, in silence. They listen, like you, to the voice of a petitioner from West Africa. . . .

*“ . . . the independence which we desire is a real, not a theoretical one. The independence to which we aspire with all our hearts, and for which we work, requires political maturity, enough staff, technical skill . . . ”*

It is an eloquent voice, expressing thoughts and ideas as fluently as might those who listen. It is also the voice of a practical mind: it goes on to speak of the arts of government, of public health, industry, agriculture, and of the desire of a people to be taught these things.

Yet the most remarkable fact about this voice is not the ideas it conveys, but that it can be heard at all in the United Nations. For this is not a delegate who speaks, not the official spokesman of a government. It is a man—a humble and modest man—who has made a long and costly journey from his native land to tell of the desire of his people to rise above their present low level of development and their political dependence.

His people are the people of a Trust Territory, one of eleven territories known by that name. It is because the destiny of the Trust Territories is a direct and special concern of the United Nations that their people enjoy this unique right to lay before the international organization their problems, grievances and hopes, and to ask for help.

Listen again to the voice from Africa:

*“ . . . I am grateful, too, to the United Nations, which has made it its first duty to help all peoples, without regard to race, origin, color, culture or opinion, to lead a full life as free men, and which, before considering the fate of under-developed countries such as mine, wishes to obtain fuller information on its aspirations and desires . . . In giving us a hearing you show that you care for the*



*Mount Kilimanjaro, highest peak in Africa, dominates the Tanganyika highlands. Although a belief in magic and witchcraft is still common to many of the tribespeople, modern progress has in the past few years gathered momentum in Tanganyika, largest of the Trust Territories. The particular responsibilities of the Administering Authority in this vast territory arise from the important European and Asian minorities which exist alongside the large African majority.*

*weak, and enable them to pursue their destiny side by side with the nations which are politically, economically and socially strong . . .”*<sup>1</sup>

## **How the Machinery Works**

The eleven Trust Territories which have this special relationship with the United Nations are scattered through those still large parts of the globe known familiarly as “the colonial world.” Their twenty million people form an important part—but still only a part—of the many more millions throughout the world who do not yet fully govern themselves. That is to say, they are unable to establish sovereign governments of their own choosing.

The Charter of the United Nations has a special place for all of these millions. Chapter XI of the Charter contains a declaration that Members of the United Nations administering territories whose peoples have not yet attained “a full measure of self-government” accept as “a sacred trust” the obligation to promote to the utmost their well-being. This and two succeeding Chapters set forth the procedures, translated into action by the United Nations, by which the international community may keep watch over the progress of dependent peoples.

The great majority of these territories are colonies, protectorates and others which are commonly known as “Non-Self-Governing Territories.” Fifty-nine of them, containing some 150,000,000 peoples, are regarded by their administering powers as falling within the scope of the Charter’s Declaration. Whether there are others which should be so defined has been a matter for debate.

In any event, in the case of these “Non-Self-Governing Territories” the responsibilities and functions of the United Nations are limited, even though they represent a great advance over past relationship between the world community and the dependent peoples. But for the eleven Trust Territories and their twenty million peoples the obligations are precise and direct. They amount in fact to the regular and detailed international supervision of the administration of each Trust Territory on the basis of objectives clearly laid down in the Charter.

<sup>1</sup>The speaker was Mr. Guillaume Bissek, from the Cameroons under French administration, before the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly on December 2, 1953.

## The Trust Territories

What exactly is the difference between these categories of territories? To the casual visitor to a Trust Territory there may appear little to distinguish it from colonies which may lie close to it and, indeed, sometimes actually alongside. The Trust Territories, as we have noted, lie deep in the "colonial world." Two of them, Somaliland and Tanganyika, are found on the tropical eastern coast of Africa, close neighbors of Kenya and other colonies. Another, Ruanda-Urundi, lies nearer the heart of Africa, alongside the Belgian Congo. Four more—the two Cameroons and the two Togolands—share their frontiers with the large French and British colonies and protectorates of West Africa.

In the Pacific Ocean, the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (comprising the Marshalls, Marianas and Carolines) sprawls over an immense stretch of the west-central part of the ocean. Further south Nauru is a tiny dot in the ocean; Western Samoa lies further south again, and New Guinea to the west. All these have colonies among their nearest neighbors.

The conditions of life of the people of a Trust Territory, the nature of their problems, and even the general form of their administration, may be quite similar to those of a nearby colony. The difference—and it is a big one—is to be found in their status in international law. To put it simply, you might say that the colonies and other "Non-Self-Governing Territories" are controlled solely by the countries which rule them: the administering powers govern them by right of possession or protection. But in the case of the Trust Territories, although the administering powers may be the same, their rights are based not on possession or protection, but on agreement with the United Nations. They administer these territories on the agreed condition that with the supervision of the United Nations they will help the people of the territories to reach a number of clearly-stated goals. Not the least of these goals is, in the words of Article 76 of the Charter, "*their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned.*"

It is worth noting that the number of territories embraced by the Trusteeship System has remained relatively small. They consist entirely of territories which have been "orphaned," so to speak, by the two great wars of this century. They fall, in fact, into only two of

three categories provided for in the United Nations Charter: territories held under League of Nations mandate, and territories detached from enemy states as a result of the Second World War. Moreover, not all of the former mandated territories have yet been brought within the system; the Union of South Africa has declined, for reasons which it believes to be firmly based but which are strongly disputed by a majority in the General Assembly, to place the territory of South-West Africa under the Trusteeship System.

Written Trusteeship Agreements approved by both parties spell out the terms of Trusteeship for each territory. Each Trusteeship Agreement imposes on the Administering Authority certain obligations, based on the principles and objectives laid down in the Charter; and each agreement grants it certain rights, including full powers of legislation, administration and jurisdiction, which are similarly governed by the provisions of the Charter.

### **United Nations Supervision**

Three principal organs of the United Nations share the task of supervising the administration of the Trust Territories—in other words, of ensuring that the people of each territory are being brought progressively towards self-government or independence and towards the other basic objectives of the Trusteeship System.

The General Assembly—the great United Nations forum in

#### **OBJECTIVES OF TRUSTEESHIP SYSTEM**

Article 76 of the Charter states that the basic objectives of the Trusteeship System are:

- a. to further international peace and security;
- b. to promote the political, economic, social, and educational advancement of the inhabitants of the Trust Territories, and their progressive development towards self-government or independence as may be appropriate to the particular circumstances of each territory and its peoples and the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned, and as may be provided by the terms of each trusteeship agreement;
- c. to encourage respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion, and to encourage recognition of the interdependence of the peoples of the world; and
- d. to ensure equal treatment in social, economic, and commercial matters for all Members of the United Nations and their nationals, and also equal treatment for the latter in the administration of justice, without prejudice to the attainment of the foregoing objectives and subject to the provisions of Article 80.



*Vast and challenging tasks face the Trusteeship Council when it meets to review the progress being made by its eleven "wards." This general view shows the Council at the opening of its thirteenth regular session, in January 1954. Seated at the centre of the horseshoe conference table is the President, Ambassador Leslie Knox Munro, of New Zealand.*



which every Member state is represented—is the highest authority in the system for all except one type of territory. The exception is the case of areas designated as strategic, for which the Charter makes the Security Council ultimately responsible. Only one territory (the Pacific Islands Trust Territory) has been so designated.

The General Assembly, while actively exercising its position of authority regarding non-strategic areas, leaves to a smaller and special organ the detailed processes of supervision. This third organ is the Trusteeship Council, designed by the Charter specifically to assist the two others in carrying out the Trusteeship functions of the United Nations.

## Membership

Part of this specific design is to be found in the composition of the Trusteeship Council. In the General Assembly the Member states administering Trust Territories are overwhelmingly outnumbered by those which do not have such responsibilities. They are outnumbered, indeed, by Member states which in relatively recent times were dependent territories themselves. The administering powers are to some extent protected from what it might be considered as unduly hasty or unreasonable action, by the fact that a two-thirds majority—a two-to-one vote—is required in the General Assembly on all final Trusteeship decisions.

### THE TRUST TERRITORIES

The eleven dependent territories placed under the International Trusteeship System are as follows:

<i>Trust Territory</i>	<i>Administering Authority</i>	<i>Population (approx.)</i>	<i>Area (Sq. Miles)</i>
Cameroons	United Kingdom	1,400,000	34,081
Togoland	United Kingdom	410,000	13,040
Tanganyika	United Kingdom	7,946,000	362,688
Cameroons	France	3,076,568	166,797
Togoland	France	1,029,946	21,236
Ruanda-Urundi	Belgium	4,109,000	20,916
Somaliland	Italy	1,242,199	194,000
Western Samoa	New Zealand	84,909	1,133
Nauru	Australia	3,244	82
New Guinea	Australia	1,100,250	93,000
Pacific Islands	U.S. of America	57,037	687

On the other hand, the composition of the Trusteeship Council was arranged by the authors of the Charter as a means of achieving a balance between the general responsibilities of all United Nations Members for the implementation of the Charter, and the particular and additional responsibilities which the Administering Authorities bear for the actual administration of the Trust Territories. Thus, the Trusteeship Council is evenly divided between administering members on the one hand and non-administering members on the other—at present six of the former and six of the latter. If the Council finds itself split that way on an important issue, it is obliged to seek a compromise if it is to make any decision at all.

The membership of the Council changes partly from time to time. Each Administering Authority is entitled to a continuing seat; so are China and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, because they are permanent members of the Security Council. But the other four members are elected for three-year terms by the General Assembly. These latter seats have in the past been held in turn by Mexico, Costa Rica, the Philippines, Iraq, Argentina, the Dominican Republic and Thailand. In January 1954, the membership of the Council was as follows:

*Administering members:* Australia, Belgium, France, New Zealand, United Kingdom, and the United States of America. *Non-administering members:* China, El Salvador, Haiti, India, Syria, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Italy, as Administering Authority in Somaliland, but not yet a Member of the United Nations, has been granted participation without voting powers in the work of the Council. It has been invited to participate in any discussions in the General Assembly relating to Somaliland. Italy administers her former colony Somaliland under Trusteeship, until it is granted independence in 1960.

Such, then, are the organs of the International Trusteeship System. How do they work? How do they, from their headquarters in New York, watch over the twenty million peoples under trust? The Charter provides the answer—more precisely, indeed, than for any other activity of the United Nations. It sets out three principal means by which the General Assembly, and the Trusteeship Council under its authority, may supervise the administration of each Trust Territory. These three means form the basis of a task that is spread over many months of every year.

## **The Annual Reports**

In the first place, the Administering Authority of each territory is required to submit annually to the General Assembly (or to the Security Council in the case of strategic areas) a report on its administration of the territory in the light of the principles and objectives of Trusteeship. The report must be based on a questionnaire drawn up by the Trusteeship Council. The present questionnaire, recently revised, is a comprehensive, even formidable-looking list of inquiries. Fully answered, it could give a verbal picture reaching into every known corner of the peoples' lives—from the nature of their political parties to the volume of their imports of pots and pans, from the reasons for polygamy to the mileage of piped water supply.

Even so, the General Assembly has expressed the view that this questionnaire might usefully be adapted to the special conditions of particular territories through separate questions drawn up for them.

These annual reports present, necessarily, the viewpoint of the Administering Authority as to its own conduct of the territory's affairs, and its own appraisal of the territory's problems. But the people, as in any country, are likely to have something to say for themselves—whether about their own personal fortunes or misfortunes, which are not likely to find their way into any official report, or about the affairs of their territory at large, on which they may or may not agree with the viewpoint of their Administering Authority.

## **Petitions**

From this universal desire for a hearing, there arises the second means of supervision: the acceptance and examination of petitions concerning the Trust Territories. Here is recognition of a unique right—the right of any man, woman or child to address his hopes, grievances or demands (if they concern a Trust Territory) directly to the United Nations. Some thousands of persons, mostly inside but a few outside the territories, acting individually or jointly, or in the name of organizations large and small, have in the last few years exercised that right.

They have ranged from a Togoland schoolboy who wistfully hoped to see railway trains running through his village, to the adults of his country asking for their independence. A Cameroonian has

wanted a wooden leg, and the leaders of Western Samoa have wanted self-government. The women of a Pacific island hoped that their menfolk might be persuaded to consume less strong drink, and the donkey-cart drivers of Mogadiscio have complained about their taxes.

The right of petition goes further than the price of a piece of notepaper and a postage stamp will take it. We have seen that a petitioner may actually appear and speak before the United Nations, and many have done so. Each request is sympathetically considered, and no serious one has yet been refused. By the end of 1953, a full score of African spokesmen from five different Trust Territories had appeared, some of them several times, before the Trusteeship Council or, more particularly, the General Assembly. Some of them represented political movements, others came to speak of the often burning problem of rights to tribal lands.

This right of petition is of unique importance. The results achieved may be a matter for argument, as we shall see later. For there may be, and there often is, a world of difference between what is asked for and what is received. If it is true that the right of petition implies the right to expect that "something will be done about it," it is also true that whatever will be done may not go far to satisfy the petitioner. But at this point we are concerned with the role of petitions, received in hundreds every year, as grist for the mill of international supervision.

### **Visiting Missions**

A third means of international supervision is the despatch to each territory of periodic visiting missions. By this means the United Nations may "see for itself" conditions in each territory, and has the power to investigate problems on the spot. The right of the United Nations to send visiting missions directly to the scene (at times agreed upon with the Administering Authority), like the right of the people to send petitions directly to the United Nations, is something which particularly distinguishes the Trusteeship System from the former Mandates System of the League of Nations. With its provision for visiting missions and the submission of petitions the new system is indeed considerably broader in scope and involves much more extensive international supervision.

A mission has visited one or another Trust Territory every year



*New roads and bridges are opening up remote and rugged areas of the British Cameroons. This bridge, in Bamenda, will replace a primitive ferry in the Trust Territory. Visiting Missions have stressed the formidable obstacles to roadmaking in the territory which, in 1953, had something over 1,500 miles of motorable roads.*

since 1947. Each regular mission visits three or four Trust Territories in the same area, which means that each territory is being visited every third year. Normally a mission consists of four members—two representatives of Administering Authorities, two of non-administering countries—and the Council appoints them as far as possible from among delegates who sit around its table. Thus you would find, in 1953, a Dominican Republic representative, a Frenchman, a Syrian and a Briton travelling westward from New York across the breadth of America and over the vast reaches of the Pacific; landing from flying boats at remote Pacific Island atolls to look at schools and hospitals and talk to the island peoples; you find them jeeping down a rough New Guinea road to confer with administrators and missionaries and doctors; being ceremoniously received by Samoan chiefs and leaders; gazing at the forest of coral pinnacles left from the extraction of Nauru's valuable phosphates; and between times discussing with its secretariat staff the reports in which it was to say what it saw, what it heard and what it thought of the progress of the territories and their peoples.

The year before that, the scene was West Africa. The delegates on the mission then were Australian, Chinese, Salvadoran and Belgian. But the activity was much the same. There was, perhaps, a change of emphasis, because West Africans are relatively much more articulate, more literate and more politically conscious. At almost every turn, they waited to talk, to harangue, to plead and to demand. The mission's files bulged with thousands of petitions and memoranda which the people of these territories thrust upon it. In 1954 it will be East Africa (for the third time) and in 1955, probably West Africa again.

Annual reports, petitions, the reports of visiting missions—these then are main sources of information on which international supervision of the Trust Territories is based. In addition, in any given year, there will be the observations of the Administering Authorities on both petitions and missions' reports; and there may also be supplementary information gathered for such special projects as studies of higher education, rural economy, and administrative unions.

All of this comes to the table of the Trusteeship Council. So, too, does a special representative of the Administering Authority in each of the Trust Territories—an official who, from his first-hand knowledge and the records at his disposal, submits still more information on request. The petitions pass through a standing committee where, if they pose particular problems, they are examined and discussed

in some detail, and action on them is recommended to the Council; if they concern general aspects of administration, they are passed on to the Council to be taken into consideration when the territory concerned is under review.

## **Annual Survey**

The Council takes up its main task: the annual survey, at one or other of the two sessions it holds each year, of the conditions, progress and problems of each of the Trust Territories in turn. We have seen the raw materials at its disposal for this task. How these materials are used now depends on the interest, energy and judgment of each member. Questions are asked, replies given, comments made. Considered opinions are expressed and suggestions are put forward. There is praise; there is also criticism. Out of it all, there emerges a concensus as to the progress made in every field of public affairs in each territory—political, economic, social and educational—and recommendations directed at the Administering Authority as to how progress may be made in the future.

The Trusteeship Council has other work to do. It must act on the proposals of its petitions committee—and perhaps 200 or even more separate resolutions in a single session—so that the Administering Authorities may know what action they are being asked to take, and the petitioners may know the first results of their appeals. It must act on requests and suggestions made to it by the General Assembly, perhaps for a review of one or another of its procedures, perhaps for special studies of particular problems; it must appoint and instruct its next visiting mission.

In performing all these tasks the Council is also preparing the substance of the report which it submits each year to the General Assembly. It will be a large report; in effect, an annual review and appraisal of conditions and events in every Trust Territory, and a survey of a large part of the operation of the International Trusteeship System.

An important phase of the annual operation of the System remains. Within a few weeks of its completion, the Council's report—together with any special reports it may have been asked to make—will be the focus of long debate in the Assembly's Fourth Committee. Before we examine some aspects of these discussions, let us look more closely at the Trust Territories themselves—the people who live in them, their problems, and the various ways in which their Administering Authorities and the United Nations are trying to help them.

## ***From Jungles to Coral Beaches: Peoples and Problems of the Territories***

The largest of the Trust Territories, Tanganyika, has nearly eight million people. The smallest, Nauru, has little more than three thousand. Ruanda-Urundi's four millions are packed tightly into a rugged little land of mountains and lakes; the Pacific Islands' fifty-seven thousand are scattered over dozens of atolls and islands. Most of Somaliland's million and a quarter are nomadic or semi-nomadic families who move endlessly over the arid plains behind the coast; many of New Guinea's million have only recently been brought under administrative control.

The face of the little world of Trusteeship changes constantly before the traveller's eyes. It changes not only from territory to territory, but sometimes just as markedly from place to place within a territory. You may gaze in the southern French Cameroons upon a modern hydro-electric station taking shape to serve modern town and factories. But journey a few hundred miles further north through steaming tropical forests, savannah country and on to dry fringes of the Sahara Desert and you may look at towns of sunbaked mud, at turbaned chiefs and colorful horsemen, hear the pipes and trumpets play, and for a moment imagine yourself in a mediaeval Moslem kingdom. Or you take a longer leap, from the meticulously terrace-cultivated hillsides of Ruanda-Urundi to the glittering coral beaches and graceful coconut palms of a Pacific Islands atoll—and again from there into the wild interior of New Guinea, where the mountain mists hang low over dark jungles.

The face of the Trusteeship lands changes constantly, and so does the face of the man of the Trust Territory. In Tanganyika he may be a Masai tribesman tending his herd, or an Indian child at school, or a European planter of sisal. In Togoland he may be an Ewe clerk at a government office desk, or a Cabrai sleeping in his round thatched hut. In the Cameroons, a French mining engineer or a Fulani grazing his cattle in the highlands. In Nauru, a Chinese laborer digging phosphate, or a district chief speaking at a council meeting.

### **Common Problems**

He can be all of these and many more—which is a way of admitting that it is impossible to speak of the "typical" Trust Territory





*The training of more indigenous school teachers is a problem common to all the Trust Territories. Here, in Western Samoa, is the model school of the Teacher's Training College where trainees are called upon to take over classes selected at random from the general school. The teacher's ability is judged by one of the European qualified teachers.*

man, and the "typical" life he leads. Yet there are some characteristics and problems which, with modifications, are strikingly common to the Trust Territories and their peoples, just as they are common to most parts of the wider world of dependent peoples. Added together, these characteristics and problems provide some of the reasons why these peoples are still regarded as not yet ready to govern themselves—why they are under Trusteeship. They also explain some of the things which the Administering Authorities and the United Nations have done, and the things which they have yet to do.

While we cannot picture the "typical" Trust Territory man, we can draw up from common characteristics an impression of some of the main elements in the lives of many millions of the twenty million peoples of the Trust Territories. We must leave aside, for the moment, many special but much smaller groups: the administrators and experts which the Administering Authorities (and occasionally the United Nations) maintain in the field; the European farmers, planters, mine owners and traders—not numerous, but important, especially in Tanganyika, the French Cameroons and New Guinea; the polyglot communities of the larger towns—the lawyers, the clerks, the businessmen, the peddlers, the trade unionists and others.

When we speak of the millions who form the majority, we refer largely to rural peoples. They are peoples who live in conditions which, by other standards, are still relatively primitive. In millions of cases, the Trust Territory man is a small farmer, living with his wife (or perhaps wives) and their children in a cluster of huts in a forest clearing, or on a grassy plain. He may own a few goats or too many cattle. But generally he lives by what he can produce from the earth through the seasons of rain and dryness. His chief pre-occupation and that of his family is simply to grow enough food to live on and—to an increasing extent nowadays—if possible to sell for cash, so that they may buy cloth and hardware, perhaps even a bicycle.

## **His World**

The world that interests him is quite small. It may not extend far beyond his village, or the nearest market town, or at most the limits of the tribe to which he belongs. But he hears something about the outside world, and catches a glimpse of it through the occasional visit of an important official. Almost certainly he cannot read or write,

although there is a chance that he may have had some rudimentary education in a mission school; his children, however, are likely to be better off in this respect.

In many cases he owes allegiance, in the first place, to the local tribal chief, and perhaps far beyond him to the powerful chief of the whole tribe. He is likely to know that his chiefs in turn are responsible to a European power, whose local administrative officer is the white man he knows best. His tribal traditions, beliefs, customs, and superstitions and the religion of his ancestors, although perhaps greatly modified, figure large in his life and thought.

The picture we have drawn is a simplified one. If it leaves the impression that in millions of cases the Trust Territory man remains, like his forefather, steeped in ancient and primitive practices, it is only partly true. It does not show the changes through which his manner of life has already passed: the suppression of abuses of power, the dwindling of the threat of famine and epidemic, and the assistance and order which the Administering Authority has, in many places, brought into his life.

Further, it does not show him, as he is in many places and as his children will be in others, on the brink of even greater change. The influences from the outside world which have been pressing in for two or three generations are now gathering greater force. Of these, the oldest and most widespread are of a material kind. Through the efforts of his Administering Authority, greatly increased in recent years, he has slowly been learning to grow more foodstuffs and to grow better kinds, he has been encouraged in many places to raise crops which the outside world will buy for cash; he has seen roads pushed through his country to carry away his produce and bring back goods he can buy; he has seen schools and medical stations and demonstration farms draw more closely within his reach.

Admittedly, he does not always take kindly to these new ways. For instance, in some parts of East Africa only with difficulty may he be persuaded to get rid of the surplus of scrawny cows which he keeps as a sign of social standing but which serve rather to impoverish him and his land. In some parts of the West African interior he may likewise resist strongly the idea that a child at school is worth more, in terms of human values, than a child toiling in the field.

It is also true that not all of the new ways are either as beneficial or as adequate as they might be. Is he being tempted, by the new lure of money wages, to work too many hours for too little pay in a European company's mine? Is he in danger of drifting into the

new slums around the booming towns? Is the nearest school still too far away, too poorly staffed—and the schooling too brief and soon forgotten? Is it enough to have a dispensary where there should be a hospital?

### **The United Nations Recommends . . .**

The above are some of the questions which the United Nations must make it its business to ask. Having found the answers, it must measure the scope of the problems that exist. It must examine the policies and programs which the Administering Authorities are applying to those problems. And it must recommend the measures which should be taken so that the objectives of Trusteeship may be most effectively attained. In these fields of economic, social and educational affairs—the fields most directly affected by the material influences mentioned above—we may find in the work of the Trusteeship Council some consistent patterns of thought.

We find the Council interested in certain definite main lines of development: increasing the share of the Trust Territory peoples in trade and business; teaching them better farming; encouraging the growth of producer and consumer co-operatives; increasing the territories' royalties from exported minerals; replacing poll taxes by graduated taxes; building more roads, schools, hospitals; training more teachers and appointing more doctors. The Council submits such ideas to the Administering Authorities in the form of suggestions and recommendations. They may sometimes include or imply criticism of what has so far been done, or their effect may be, and often is, to encourage the Administering Authority concerned to continue and extend programs which it is already carrying out.

### **Key to Progress**

In the train of the material influences of the outside world, there have come to the Trust Territories at least the beginning of a political consciousness. Education in particular is the key that is opening the mind of the Trust Territory man to the ideas of modern democracy. The ideas, like education, do not come simultaneously to the whole people of a territory. They tend to flourish, first, where educational facilities are most advanced and outside contacts strongest—the principal towns and centres of trade and government. An *élite* or educated minority takes form, grows, and spreads its influence further and further afield. Leaders emerge, most often from among



*The market at Rabaul, New Britain district of New Guinea, is wholly conducted by the people of the district. It is patronized extensively by the European and Asian populations as well as by the local inhabitants. Shell money as well as Australian currency is used in the market. Often described as the most backward of all the Trust Territories, the standard of advancement of the more than one million people of New Guinea ranges from the few sophisticated inhabitants of the coastal areas to the "stone-age dwellers" of the rugged interior.*

men who have been abroad for higher education. They gain popular support. The old ways of tribal and hereditary authority, as well as of "foreign" control, are opened to question. The new ideas begin to take root: ideas of popular representation in the councils of government, suffrage, political organization, a share in the making of policy and law. And, in the long run, the beginning of popular demand for self-government or independence.

In some Trust Territories we find that that process is well advanced. In others it has hardly begun. It is an ever-evolving affair. The Administering Authority may seek to anticipate it, or at least to keep pace with it, and to channel it along desired paths, by providing the encouragement and the means: for instance, the appointment and then election of representatives of the people to executive and legislative organs, the replacing of traditional chiefs and councils by elected village and district bodies, and the educating and training of Africans or Pacific islanders to take over posts of importance in the administration.

### **Difficult Road**

The encouragement of such developments forms the pattern of most of the recommendations of the Trusteeship Council in the field of political development in the Trust Territories. But the way to the final goal set by the Charter—self-government or independence—is beset with complex problems, both for the Administering Authorities and the United Nations. On all sides there is agreement in principle on the main elements of political advance—popular representation, local government reform, and the like. But to agree on the method, the timing and the stages along the way to self-government is much more difficult. It is complicated also by factors such as, for instance, the presence in some territories of European and other immigrant minorities more highly advanced than the indigenous people; and by arrangements under which some of the territories are closely tied within the political systems of the Administering Authorities.

Thus, the small sectors of the Cameroons and Togoland which are under British administration are governed as integral parts of their neighbors, Nigeria and the Gold Coast, respectively. On the French side, elected representatives of the people sit not only in their own territorial assemblies but also in the French parliament, where the laws of Trust Territories and colonies alike are made.

New Guinea is administered with its Australian neighbor Papua, and Tanganyika shares some common services with British Kenya and Uganda. These relationships present difficult problems, not yet solved, in the West African territories particularly where political consciousness is well advanced.

In principle, the way ahead is clearest in Somaliland, unique among Trust Territories in that it has a time limit set by the General Assembly for independence (1960). The problem there is to build the political, economic and social structure that will make independence most worthwhile for the Somali people. And Western Samoa, which petitioned for self-government in 1947 (and which visiting missions in that year and again in 1950 considered unready for it), has been offered by its Administering Authority, New Zealand, the chance to work out its own destiny at a constitutional conference in 1954.

### ***Judging the Results***

The General Assembly, as we have indicated, leaves to the Trusteeship Council the main burden of the detailed task of international supervision. But at each of its annual sessions the General Assembly exercises, in an active way, its own authority in respect of the operation of the Trusteeship System.

Through its Fourth Committee, the General Assembly reviews at some length the work of the Council and the progress of the system as a whole. It may make suggestions or recommendations for possible improvements in the Council's methods of work; in the past, for instance, it has been particularly concerned to ensure that petitions concerning the Trust Territories should be dealt with promptly and effectively, and the Council has reported revisions of its procedures to that end. The Assembly may ask the Council to undertake special tasks: for instance, a continuing examination of the problem of the administrative and political relationships of Trust Territories with neighboring territories; and studies of problems of higher education and rural economic development.

Again, the General Assembly may add the weight of its opinion to that of the Council on a territorial problem that has proved difficult to solve: for example, the problem of the aspirations of the peoples of the two Togolands, involving demands for some form

of unification of the divided territories, which has occupied the attention of the United Nations since the Trusteeship System began. Or it may inaugurate some special project of its own, such as the invitation which it has extended—with encouraging results—to all its members to make fellowships and scholarships available for students from Trust Territories.

Finally, the General Assembly has shown its readiness to hear petitioners from the Trust Territories, to discuss their requests and grievances, and to take action on them independently or in coordination with the Trusteeship Council.

In such ways as these the General Assembly completes each annual cycle of the operation of the International Trusteeship System. It has barely voted its last resolutions before the Council prepares for the next cycle, taking up the annual reports which record the events and developments in another year in the lives of the peoples under trust, the new petitions which have flowed in from the territories, and the arrangements for the visiting mission which must soon go out to Africa or the Pacific.

## **World Opinion**

The whole operation of the International Trusteeship System is in a state of evolution. And so, too, after all, are the affairs and destinies of the Trust Territories and their peoples.

The impact of Trusteeship upon their affairs defies any exact judgment. For it must be borne in mind that in each of the present Trust Territories it is the Administering Authority, and not the United Nations, which has the power of actual government. The Charter makes it possible for the United Nations itself to become an Administering Authority, but this has not yet happened. The nearest approach is the case of Somaliland, where Italy must consult a United Nations Advisory Council stationed in the territory on all important projects.

Everywhere else, the governing power of the Administering Authority is qualified in only one way, however important that way may be: it must be exercised in conformity with the principles and objectives laid down in the Charter. And the Administering Authorities themselves have solemnly undertaken to honor those principles and objectives.

The present power of the United Nations in the Trust Territories,



then, is to supervise, not to govern; to encourage, to criticize, to recommend, not to make laws and carry them out. Its power, indeed, is no greater and no less than the power of public opinion—the organized opinion of the world community.

## **Heartening Signs**

In this review of the International Trusteeship System it must be emphasized that less than eight years have elapsed since the United Nations set up machinery to aid the advancement of dependent peoples. Nevertheless, by the end of 1953, all the important functions and procedures by which the Organization supervises the administration of the Trust Territories were in full operation and certain heartening signs for the future effectiveness of Trusteeship are visible.

Increasing interest is being displayed in the Trusteeship System and the principles of Chapter XII of the Charter; the spirit of colonialism is gradually being replaced by twentieth-century ideas; intolerance and exploitation are evils of the past; the dependent peoples are advancing along the path of democracy. But it can readily be seen that such progress is a slow and arduous task. In the words of Ambassador Leslie Knox Munro, of New Zealand, the 1953 President of the Trusteeship Council: "Spectacular results cannot often be expected in the field of Trusteeship, because the advancement of whole populations toward self-government is a slow, onerous and difficult task requiring much planning and perseverance by all concerned. Nevertheless, substantial progress is being made and at least two Trust Territories are approaching the goal of self-government. It is my belief that these developments demonstrate the value of the Trusteeship System and the important role played by the Trusteeship Council as encouragement to the advancement of the millions of people living in the Trust Territories."

## ***Non-Self-Governing Territories***

We have already seen that in addition to the people living in the Trust Territories there are millions of others who are not yet governing themselves—about 150 millions in fact. These dependent peoples live along the great Equatorial belt of Africa or in the archipelagos of South-East Asia; still others are scattered through the

countries of the Caribbean, or among the thousands of islands which dot the Pacific from Alaska to New Zealand and from Panama to the Philippines. Some of these are well known through their fame gained in the Second World War—islands such as Guam, the Solomons and Samoa; others are best known to sailors or stamp collectors—Christmas Island, Pitcairn and Rarotonga; many are mere pin points on the map.

## **Many Races**

The peoples of these dependent areas differ greatly in race, tradition and culture, just as their native lands vary in size, location and natural resources. For example, the people of Borneo and Papua have a simple economy and their culture is primitive. On the other hand the inhabitants of Nigeria and many other African territories possess a rich indigenous culture. Then again, the Eastern Mediterranean island of Cyprus, often regarded as a part of Asia Minor, has a distinct European cultural tradition.

For the most part these dependent peoples live by an economy that is preponderantly agricultural, producing raw materials such as rice, sugar, coffee, tea, cocoa and rubber; these are exported, often to the metropolitan country, in return for manufactured goods. There are still other territories which rely largely on commerce and shipping for their existence; for instance, Singapore and Hong Kong are two of the world's busiest ports. Large-scale industries have also developed in many of the territories, such as Trinidad and the Belgian Congo. Many of these territories, particularly those in West Africa and the Caribbean area, have now reached the threshold of self-determination, with their people participating actively in the management of their own affairs. For others, the road to autonomy is still long and difficult. The resources of all these territories, their potentiality as markets, their manpower, their strategic location, and their military weakness have in the past created rivalries among nations which desired to extend control over them. International friction arising from this situation has contributed substantially to the fomenting of wars.

The architects of San Francisco recognized that the well-being of these colonial peoples was a matter of vital international concern. However, no specific provision was made in the Charter for United



*United Nations technical assistance schemes are bringing modern methods to spur progress in many of the world's dependent territories. As the result of a recent survey, experts of the Food and Agriculture Organization are working with local specialists on long-term plans for the reconstruction and expansion of Jamaica's agriculture economy. As part of the program to increase its rice production, the Government of Jamaica has converted a former wasteland into an agricultural station for developing better techniques of rice production. This picture shows the type of tractor and harrow used at the Government's experimental farm.*

Nations supervision over Non-Self-Governing Territories. But during the last few years the General Assembly, through its Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories, has shown increasing concern over conditions in these dependent territories and has continually urged the colonial powers to report more fully on the overall progress being made by their "wards."

It was also recognized at San Francisco that very few of these dependent territories could hope to become self-governing overnight. The evolution was underway but much careful preparation was needed. Help and guidance was essential to steer the territories and their peoples—the vast majority of whom were illiterate—along the difficult path to autonomy. Indeed, Lord Cranborne, of the United Kingdom, declared: "We are all of us in favor of freedom, but freedom for many of these territories means assistance and guidance and protection. They cannot all afford the risks of independence for which they are ill-equipped. Many are small, poor and defenceless. They could not stand on their own feet unassisted."

Lord Cranborne pointed out that one general principle could be laid down to apply to all dependent territories. "In every area, whether backward or advanced, there must be a duty on colonial powers to train and educate the indigenous peoples to govern themselves."

### **Positive Measures Needed**

Australia pointed out at the Conference that it was not sufficient to protect the dependent peoples from various abuses, as the Covenant of the League had attempted. Positive measures to assist them must also be taken. It therefore proposed important additions to the *Declaration*. Research in the economic and social problems of dependent peoples should be encouraged; positive measures for their economic development and the raising of standards of living should be promoted; and annual reports on political, economic, and social developments should be furnished. This proposal was not accepted in its entirety, but the Conference adopted Australia's alternative proposal, obliging Administering Authorities to transmit regularly statistics and other information relating to the economic and social development of the people concerned. Deputy Prime Minister Forde, of Australia, regarded the furnishing of such information as of great importance. "From that source," he stated, "we can obtain the facts as to the health, nutrition, and labor con-

ditions of the native peoples, and we shall be able to ascertain therefrom what has been achieved in their interest from time to time. This should result in a healthy competition between colonial powers for the achievement of better conditions for all the peoples under their care.”

Ultimately, the San Francisco Conference approved the proposal put forward by Australia and the United Kingdom that the United Nations Charter should contain a “colonial charter,” subsequently known as the *Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories*, to apply to all dependencies.

Chapter XI of the Charter is indeed a Declaration regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories which goes far beyond any previous international agreement in the responsibilities undertaken on behalf of dependent peoples. It applies to the territories of Member states of the United Nations. Under this Declaration the administering powers accept “as a sacred trust” the obligation to promote to the utmost the well-being of their dependent peoples.

Under Article 73e of Chapter XI, administering Members of the United Nations agreed to transmit regularly “statistical and other information of a technical nature relating to economic, social, and educational conditions in the territories for which they are respectively responsible . . . ”

### ***The Committee on Information***

This mass of information is then duly summarized and analyzed by the Secretariat and subsequently studied by the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories specially appointed by the General Assembly. Since 1948 this sixteen member organ has met annually to consider the information submitted on dependent territories and has adopted many specific recommendations designed to speed the progress of dependent peoples toward self-government.

To overcome certain problems a Standard Form was compiled for the guidance of the administering powers in preparing their information on the respective territories.

This Standard Form—adopted by the Assembly with minor changes—was originally proposed by the United States. Its first section deals with general information, certain parts of which are of a political and administrative nature. It was agreed that the transmission of this type of information should be optional—though the

question has been a controversial subject in many Committee debates.

The other sections of the Standard Form are given over to topics dealing with economic social, and educational conditions.

By this process of examining the summaries and analyses of information submitted on Non-Self-Governing Territories, Member states are able to discuss colonial conditions fully and frankly, while the administering powers profit from the exchange of views and constructive criticism. In addition, through discussion in an international forum, the world is kept constantly informed of progress in the Non-Self-Governing areas.

In December, 1952, the General Assembly decided to continue the Committee on Information from Non-Self-Governing Territories

### **The Dependent Territories**

Information on the following Non-Self-Governing Territories was submitted to the United Nations in 1953.

**CENTRAL AFRICAN TERRITORIES:** Belgian Congo, French Equatorial Africa, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

**EAST AFRICAN TERRITORIES:** British Somaliland, French Somaliland, Kenya, Uganda, Zanzibar.

**SOUTHERN AFRICAN TERRITORIES:** Basutoland, Bechuanaland, and Swaziland.

**INDIAN OCEAN TERRITORIES:** Comoro, Madagascar, Mauritius, and Seychelles.

**WEST AFRICAN TERRITORIES:** French West Africa, Gambia, Gold Coast, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

**MEDITERRANEAN TERRITORIES:** Cyprus, Gibraltar, Morocco and Tunisia.

**CARIBBEAN TERRITORIES:** Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, British Guiana, British Honduras, Jamaica, Leeward Islands, Trinidad, Virgin Islands, and Windward Islands.

**ASIAN TERRITORIES:** Brunei, Federation of Malaya, Hong Kong, North Borneo, Sarawak, and Singapore.

**PACIFIC TERRITORIES:** American Samoa, Fiji, Gilbert and Ellice, Guam, Hawaii, New Hebrides, Pitcairn, Solomons, Netherlands, New Guinea, Papua, Cook Islands, Niue, and Tokelau.

**OTHER TERRITORIES:** Aden, Alaska, Falklands, Greenland and St. Helena.

for a further three-year term, after which it resolved to examine the question of the organ's further renewal, composition and terms of reference. The Committee is so constituted as to include all the Members transmitting information under Article 73e and an equal number of Members elected by the Assembly's Fourth Committee. Thus, in 1953 the Committee was composed of: *administering members*: Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, United Kingdom, United States. *Elected members*: Brazil, China, Burma, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Guatemala.

Of the dependent territories on which information was submitted to the United Nations in 1953, thirty-nine are administered by Britain, eight by France, six by the United States, three by New Zealand and one each by Australia, Denmark, Belgium and the Netherlands.

## **Reviewing Conditions**

In addition to its overall appraisal of the information submitted and the special studies made by the Secretariat to supplement such data, the Committee each year devotes special attention to one of the functional fields—economic, social or educational conditions—in the territories. Specialized agencies, such as the World Health Organization and the International Labor Organization, make valuable contributions to these special studies, while representatives of these agencies also participate in the Committee's debates. The Committee's specific recommendations in each field are then submitted to the General Assembly which may adopt the various proposals, all designed to speed the overall advancement of dependent territories.

For example, the General Assembly has invited the administering Member states to promote the development of indigenous languages and, in other recent proposals, has called for the abolition of all vestiges of racial discrimination in dependent territories, and for the active participation of qualified indigenous representatives from the territories in the work of the Committee.

## **Study on Education**

It is not possible in this brief review to detail the many recommendations and observations of the Committee during the past few years. But, in order to gain some impression of its important work, we may examine an appraisal of educational conditions, prospects

and developments in the Non-Self-Governing Territories, on which subject a special study was made by the Committee at its 1953 session. Both administering and non-administering states all emphasized the vital importance of education in the advancement of dependent peoples although differences were expressed on the degree of its importance. After intensive debate the Committee drew several conclusions, many of which will help the administering powers in formulating and directing their future educational programs in the dependent areas.

The Committee found that education has advanced appreciably in the world's Non-Self-Governing territories since 1950. There are more children at school, more students at universities, and more money is being spent on education.

Thus, in 59 of the territories the number of children enrolled in schools rose from over 5,000,000 to over 7,000,000 between 1945-46 and 1951. In British-administered territories, full-time university students increased to 3,234 in 1952, while the number studying abroad at British and Irish universities rose from less than 4,000 in 1950 to some 6,000 at the beginning of the year. There was also a marked rise in the number of students from French-administered territories attending French metropolitan institutions, those from North Africa totalling over 2,000 in mid-1952, with some 1,700 from other French territories.

Examples of the rise in educational expenditures by the Administering Authorities were provided by: (a) the Belgian Congo, where the recurrent budget for 1952 came to 482 million francs; (b) French Equatorial Africa, where the recurrent budget climbed to 1,495 million francs in 1952; and (c) an annual increase of about £4,000,000 in seven British territories in Africa.

## **Much To Be Done**

It was agreed, however, that much remains to be done. The increases in school enrollment must be balanced against the situation in many parts of Africa, where less than one-tenth of the children are attending school. Here and elsewhere, a large proportion of the children enrolled fail or are unable to remain at school for anything near the minimum period necessary to lay the first foundations of a literate population. In general, fewer girls than boys go to primary schools. Still fewer attend secondary schools. Again, while the proportion of government revenue spent on education is from 15 to 20



per cent or more of territorial revenue in a number of territories, it falls far below 10 per cent in many others. In brief, the opportunities for school attendance are far below the demands and the needs of the peoples.

The use of the vernacular as a medium of instruction was considered by the Committee in the light of reports by UNESCO experts that there is nothing in the structure of any language which precludes it from becoming a vehicle of modern civilization, and that the mother tongue is the best medium for teaching a child.

The Committee found that despite favorable developments since 1950, there remain wide differences in the educational facilities open to children of different groups in some territories. Thus, compulsory education in certain African territories is applied to all but African children. There is a wide diversity in the sums spent on the education of each child according to the category assigned to him by law.

Other pertinent observations made by the Committee touched upon the questions of primary education, teacher training and the education of women in the dependent territories. To sum up, the Committee found that the ultimate aims of education in dependent areas should be:

(a) To develop moral and civic consciousness and responsibility among the peoples, and to enable them to take an increasing share of responsibility in the conduct of their own affairs.

(b) To raise the living standards by helping the people to improve their economic productivity and standards of health.

(c) To promote the social progress of the territories, taking into account the basic cultural values and the aspirations of the peoples concerned.

(d) To extend the intellectual development of the peoples so as to give them access to all levels of culture.

Education, the Committee resolved, is thus an integral part of general progress, reaching the adults as well as the children and aiming at the highest possible development of the individual in the changing society of which he forms a part. In the Non-Self-Governing Territories this process will include familiarity with and training in the use of the tools of economic, social and political advancement so that a full measure of self-government can be attained.

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## **Conclusion**

It may be seen that through the machinery set up under the Charter, the United Nations has the factual basis for keeping informed of the well-being and advancement of the dependent peoples of its Member states. The transmitted information can be compared by the Administering Authorities to their mutual advantage; and it can keep world public opinion informed on the progress and needs of the peoples of the Non-Self-Governing Territories.

The work has also been bearing other results. From their examination of the summaries and analyses of all this information, the Member states can discuss colonial conditions everywhere—and the administering nations can profit from the mutual exchange of constructive criticism. Furthermore, the entire world is thus kept informed of developments in Non-Self-Governing areas through the discussions in the greatest of international forums—the General Assembly.

The work of the United Nations in this sphere also has inestimable psychological significance. To the many millions of peoples scattered over the globe, the Declaration Regarding Non-Self-Governing Territories is not simply another pious statement in an international document of no real applicability to them. Rather, this “international charter of colonial administration” is today in full force—and its provisions are the continuing concern of all Member states.

### **TRUSTEESHIP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**

Students from several Trust Territories are now studying in India and the United States, and early in 1954 special opportunities awaited others in both those countries and in Indonesia, Turkey, and Yugoslavia, as a result of a scholarship project launched by the General Assembly in 1951. The Assembly invited Member states to make available to qualified students from the Trust Territories fellowships, scholarships and internships. Several countries have responded during 1953-54. At its thirteenth session in 1954, the Trusteeship Council approved revised procedures for the administration of the program. These will permit applications to be made either through government authorities in the Trust Territories or through the Secretary-General. In the latter case applications are sent simultaneously to the offering country and to the authorities of the Trust Territory concerned.

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